

THE HONORABLE JOHN C. COUGHENOUR

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON  
AT SEATTLE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, *ex rel.*  
RYAN SLATER,

Plaintiff,

v.

CENTRAL PUGET SOUND REGIONAL  
TRANSIT AUTHORITY,

Defendant.

CASE NO. C19-1715-JCC

ORDER

This matter comes before the Court on the Government's third *ex parte* application for an extension of time to consider whether to elect to intervene (Dkt. No. 11). Having considered the Government's application and the relevant record and finding good cause the Court GRANTS the application.

On October 24, 2019, Relator Ryan Slater filed a complaint under seal against Defendant Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority pursuant to the *qui tam* provisions of the False Claims Act ("FCA"), 31 U.S.C. §§ 3729–33. (*See* Dkt. No. 1.) Relator served the Government with the complaint and supporting evidence on November 5, 2019. (*See* Dkt. No. 9 at 2.) The FCA allows the Government at least 60 days after it is served to determine whether to intervene. *See* 31 U.S.C. § 3730(a), (b)(2). Accordingly, the initial 60-day period in this matter was scheduled to expire on January 3, 2020.

1 On December 20, 2019, the Government applied for a six-month extension of its deadline  
2 to decide whether to intervene and requested that the Court maintain the complaint under seal  
3 until July 3, 2020. (*See* Dkt. No. 7.) The Court granted the application. (*See* Dkt. No. 8.) During  
4 that six-month period, the Government interviewed Relator twice and reviewed hundreds of  
5 pages of documents, but the COVID-19 pandemic impeded the Government's ability to  
6 interview other witnesses. (*See* Dkt. No. 9 at 3–4.)

7 On June 30, 2020, the Government applied for a second six-month extension of its  
8 deadline to decide whether to intervene and requested that the Court maintain the complaint  
9 under seal until January 4, 2021. (*See* Dkt. No. 9.) The Court granted the application. (*See* Dkt.  
10 No. 10.) During that six-month period, the Government has reviewed thousands of pages of  
11 documents. (*See* Dkt. No. 11 at 10.)

12 The Government now applies for a third six-month extension to collect additional  
13 documents. (*See id.*) The Government represents that Relator “concur[s] with this request.” (*Id.* at  
14 1.)

15 Under the FCA, the Court may grant an extension “for good cause shown.” 31 U.S.C.  
16 § 3730(b)(3). Having reviewed the Government’s *ex parte* application and the relevant record,  
17 the Court finds good cause to grant an extension. The Court therefore GRANTS the  
18 Government’s *ex parte* application (Dkt. No. 11) and ORDERS the Government to notify the  
19 Court whether the Government will intervene by July 5, 2021. The Clerk is DIRECTED to  
20 maintain the complaint, this order, and other filings in this matter under seal until further order of  
21 the Court.

22 DATED this 4th day of January 2021.

23  
24  
25  
26  


John C. Coughenour  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE